

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

Historically, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was not traditionally a forum for the discussion of fisheries issues, but this changed in the 1990s when it took up the problem of large-scale, pelagic driftnet fishing on the high seas. UNGA Resolution 44/225, adopted in 1990, called for a moratorium on the use of this fishing gear on the high seas by June 30, 1992. This Resolution was supplanted by UNGA Resolution 46/215, which delayed the effective date of the moratorium until December 31, 1992.

Since that time, the United Nations General Assembly has annually provided guidance for the sustainable management of global living marine resources in an annual Sustainable Fisheries Resolution. UNGA fisheries resolutions address: achieving sustainable fisheries; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; monitoring, control and surveillance and compliance and enforcement; fishing overcapacity; large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing; fisheries by-catch and discards; subregional and regional cooperation; responsible fisheries in the marine ecosystem; capacity building; implementation of the Food and Agriculture Organization Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas; and implementation of the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA).

In 2004, the UNGA Sustainable Fisheries Resolution included calls to States and RFMOs to take action regarding the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems from significant adverse impacts. In 2006, 2009 and 2011, the UNGA conducted, in conjunction with the annual negotiations, a review of progress by States and RFMOs in implementing these provisions of the Resolutions, with a view to providing further recommendations, where necessary. The next review will take place in 2016.

Additionally, the UN General Assembly negotiates a resolution that focuses on broader oceans issues, which can affect fisheries management, such as initiatives to address marine debris, marine protected areas and coastal zone management. The United States is represented at each of these negotiations by the Department of State and supported by NOAA and NOAA Fisheries technical expertise.

Web address: www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm

Staff Contacts

NOAA Fisheries:

Cheri McCarty
Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone: (301) 427-8369
Fax: (301) 713-2313
Email: Cheri.McCarty@noaa.gov